Memdeklaro de identeco

Self-declaration of identity

Memdeklaro is a philosophical project that empowers people to **self-declare their own identity** - without third parties such as birth parents, birth cultures or birth countries.

Memdeklaro positions itself as a **humanitarian alternative** to the exclusionary state monopoly on identity and supports the three freedoms: freedom of name, freedom of belief and freedom of association.

Memdeklaro supports a world where people are judged only on their character, beliefs and actions, not on where they were born, who they were born to, or what their birth culture was. A world where individuals have power over their own lives - the power to leave corrupt governments, hostile cultures and abusers, and thrive in a self-chosen community.

> *"Self-declaration of identity gives people the power to decide their own fate, and creates a world where actions and beliefs matter more than arbitrary circumstances of birth."*

The Problem

Millions of people worldwide have no access to government ID. Nation-states routinely refuse to issue birth certificates, national ID cards and passports to people, most often due to the circumstances of their birth, rather than due to their own actions as an adult. This group may include stateless people, refugees, people who weren't registered at birth, and people who escaped from child abuse, domestic abuse or cult abuse.

As government ID is increasingly required for employment, housing, healthcare, education, travel and daily life necessities, this leaves people at best on the edge of society or at worst criminalized for existing. In this situation, cash in hand jobs and informal apartment rentals are an essential lifeline, but as the state cracks down on the gray market economy, exclusion from the state monopoly on identity could mean life or death.

> *"You may think economic exclusion — banned from employment, housing, healthcare, education, banking, travel, contracts, mail, sim cards and more — would be a punishment for only the most severe of crimes. But for stateless people, refugees, victims of abuse and people who weren't registered at birth, it is a punishment for being born."*

In an ideal world, everyone would be granted a legal identity at age 18, without requirements and without needing permission from birth parents or the birth country. Or there would be a way to earn a legal identity as an adult, or receive an identity based on fingerprints and a photo. Or at least a way to get a stateless passport in order to be allowed to apply for a work, marriage or humanitarian visa in a different country. An adult would be able to independently legalize themselves through their own efforts, regardless of the situation that they were born into.

However, the United Nations no longer issues Nansen Passports (despite that they saved thousands of lives), the Red Cross rarely issues Emergency Travel Documents, and nation-states generally refuse to issue stateless passports, even though these exist by law. Access to asylum procedures, stateless determination procedures, delayed registration of birth, child protective services or witness protection is often declined, or in the worst case, the victim is forcibly returned to the abusers against their will.

Furthermore, the collectivist concept of citizenship can be dangerous. For example, if someone does not identify with their birth culture, they should not be forced to

follow it for life. Instead, they should be free to dissent against this culture and leave this culture's jurisdiction. Even worse is conscription - the cruel system where a nation-state can force someone against their will to kill or be killed, just because they happened to be born inside a certain territory.

In the current system, birth countries become cruel captors, without a way to earn release or seek freedom under a different culture or jurisdiction. Your personal beliefs, actions and efforts do not matter. Your inherent humanity and personhood is denied. There is no way to prove your worth or defy the circumstances of your birth.

The Solution

Memdeklaro takes the power away from the state monopoly and empowers people to define their own name, culture and personal ties.

> *"The blood of the covenant is thicker than the water of the womb."*

The **self-declaration of identity** is a CR-80 plastic card or paper business card (85.6mm x 54mm). It is not stored in a central database, does not require a third party's permission and does not need to be issued by an authority. You are the authority over your own life.

The self declaration is written in Esperanto, an anational language of peace, built on freedom of belief and freedom of association. It features artwork of a peace dove in the sky.

The self-declaration includes the text:

- Title: Self-declaration of identity *(Memdeklaro de identeco)*
- Location: Esperanto community *(Esperantujo)*
- Issuer: EPO *(ISO code for Esperanto)*
- Quote: One world, one humankind *(Unu mondo, unu homaro)*

The self-declaration of identity contains:

- Self-chosen first name *(Antaŭnomo)*
- Self-chosen surname *(Nomo)*
- Birth date *(Naskiĝdato)*
- Photo *(35mm x 45mm)*
- Signature *(Subskribo)*
- Notes field *(Notoj)*
- Example note: "The holder is a conscientious objector" *(Portanto estas konscienca obĵetanto)*
- Arbitrary ID number *(Numero)*, issuance date *(Eldondato)*, expiry date *(Limdato)*, issuer *(Eldonisto)*, MRZ

The self-declaration of identity does not contain:

- Place of birth *(To allow people to cut ties with hostile environments and self-define their culture, beliefs and personal ties)*
- Citizenship or stateless status *(To allow people to cut ties with hostile governments or cultures, and exist as an individual instead of as property of a state that they did not choose)*
- Parents' names *(To allow victims of child abuse to cut ties with abusers)*

To make your own:

- Use the generator on https://memdeklaro.surge.sh/
- Or download the template here: https://memdeklaro.surge.sh/memdeklaro.zip and add your text and photo using an image editor
- Print it out as a business card (85.6mm x 54mm) or order a CR-80 plastic card from a printing service

"The choice of your own name and renunciation of your circumstances of birth is a liberating act of individualism, where your ideals, actions and efforts matter more than the situation that you were arbitrarily born into."

Template

Memdeklaro de identeco
Esperantujo
Nomo
Antaŭnomo
Naskiĝdato
Eldondato
Limdato
Subskribo
Numero

Notoj
Eldonisto
Unu mondo, unu homaro

Alternative non-government IDs

- World Passport: https://worldcitizengov.org/what-is-the-world-passport/ It is possible to apply for a World Passport using only fingerprints. An existing government ID is not required.
- Digitalcourage ID: https://shop.digitalcourage.de/gadgets/lichtbildausweis-mit-selbst-waehlbaren-daten.html You can get a Digitalcourage ID under a self-chosen name. An existing government ID is not required.

Disclaimer

ID requirements do more harm than good and should not be seen as a viable solution for trust or authentication.

Many economic and social interactions can be done anonymously, such as buying a loaf of bread or a bus ticket, or visiting a concert.

For other situations, trust can be achieved by simply saying your self-chosen name, using a web-of-trust, word-of-mouth reputation, vouches, memberships, escrows or cash deposits.

Authentication can be achieved by using a password, cryptographic key pair (e.g. PGP, Monero) or physical key or code (such as room keys or a safe code).

Requiring a government-assigned identity only began in recent decades. Before, a self-declared identity was the norm, and still exists under certain jurisdictions such as English Common Law.

Further Reading

For further reading about identity:

- Passports Were a "Temporary" War Measure - Speranta Dumitru https://fee.org/articles/passports-were-a-temporary-war-measure
- During World War II, we did have something to hide - Hans de Zwart https://medium.com/@hansdezwart/during-world-war-ii-we-did-have-something-to-hide-40689565c550
- With each person left living on the streets, we are losing as a society - Petr Baroch https://www.statelessness.eu/blog/each-person-left-living-streets-we-are-losing-society
- The rarely discussed dangers of KYC and what you can do about it – Anarkio https://vonupodcast.com/know-your-customer-kyc-the-rarely-discussed-danger-guest-article-audio
- Exclusion and identity: life without ID - Privacy International https://www.privacyinternational.org/long-read/2544/exclusion-and-identity-life-without-id
- Proving who I am: the plight of people in detention without proof of legal identity - Vicki Prais https://www.penalreform.org/blog/proving-who-i-am-the-plight-of-people/
- Establishing identity is a vital, risky and changing business - The Economist https://www.economist.com/christmas-specials/2018/12/18/establishing-identity-is-a-vital-risky-and-changing-business
- What's in a name? The case for inclusivity through anonymity - Common Thread https://blog.twitter.com/common-thread/en/topics/stories/2021/whats-in-a-name-the-case-for-inclusivity-through-anonymity
- True Names Not Required: On Identity and Pseudonymity in Cyberspace - Der Gigi https://dergigi.medium.com/true-names-not-required-fc6647dfe24a

Translations

Memdeklaro de identenco: self declaration of identity, autodeclaración de identidad, autodeclaração de identidade, autodéclaration d’identité, autodichiarazione di identità, autodeclararea identității, Selbsterklärung zur Identität, eigen verklaring van identiteit, Selvdeklaration af identitet, självdeklaration av identitet, egenerklæring om identitet, henkilöllisyysvakuutus, Isikuandmete esitamine, identitātes pašdeklarēšana, savęs deklaravimas, önbevallás a személyazonosságról, własna deklaracja tożsamości, vlastní prohlášení o totožnosti, vlastné vyhlásenie o totožnosti, samoprijava identitete, самодекларирање на самоличността, самопроголошення ідентичності, самозаявление о личности, αυτο-δήλωση ταυτότητας, pernyataan identitas diri, öz kimlik beyanı, الإعلان الذاتي عن الهوية, 身份自报, 身份自報, 自己申告

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Github: https://github.com/memdeklaro/

Memdeklaro

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https://memdeklaro.github.io/

The humanitarian alternative
to government ID